

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
/066 W

-----040638 010339Z /12

R 310840Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0983
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY MANILA
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SINGAPORE 3896

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PEPR, ASEAN, VN
SUBJECT: VIETNAMESE PRIME MINISTER'S ASEAN VISITS

REF: A) SINGAPORE 3755, B) JAKARTA 11191, C) KUALA LUMPUR 9089

1. IN COURSE OF AUGUST 29 CONVERSATION WITH NEW MFA DEPUTY
DIRECTOR OF POLITICAL DIVISION FOR SOUTHEAST ASIA, LIN CHUNG YIN,
EMBOFFS INQUIRED ABOUT FORTHCOMING VISIT OF VIETNAMESE PRIME
MINISTER PHAM VAN DONG TO ASEAN COUNTRIES. LIN CONFIRMED THAT
GOS HAD RECEIVED NO INQUIRY FROM SRV ON VISIT TO SINGAPORE,
EITHER DIRECTLY OR THROUGH THIRD COUNTRY. LIN INDICATED THAT
GOS WAS NOT "DISAPPOINTED" AT OMISSION, BUT ARE NOT SURE
WHY SINGAPORE "LEFT OUT." HE SPECULATED THAT VIETNAMESE MAY
KNOW THAT PRIME MINISTER LEE KUAN YEW WILL BE AWAY AT THE
TIME PHAM VAN DONG IS MAKING HIS VISITS. LIN INDICATED THAT
VIETNAMESE HAVE BEEN QUITE RIGID ON DATES IN DISCUSSING THE VISIT
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IN OTHER ASEAN CAPITALS, ADJUSTING THEIR INITIAL PREFERENCES
ONLY FOR MALAYSIA.

2. ASKED IF THERE HAD BEEN ANYTHING DURING THE PHAN HEIN
VISIT TO DISSUADE THE SRV FROM INCLUDING SINGAPORE ON DONG'S
ITINERARY, LIN STATED THAT IN GOS VIEW PHAN HEIN VISIT WENT
WELL. HE MENTIONED AGREEMENT TO GIVE DIPLOMATIC STATUS TO

TRADE MISSIONS OF THE TWO GOVERNMENTS, AND SAID SINGAPORE MISSION IN HANOI WOULD BE ESTABLISHED WITHIN THREE TO SIX MONTHS. LOGISTICAL PROBLEMS--ALLOCATION OF FUNDS AND ASSIGNING PEOPLE--WILL TAKE SOME TIME, HOWEVER, AND IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO OPEN MISSION BEFORE END OF YEAR. LIN RECOUNTED STORY OF RAJA'S ASKING PHAN HEIN IF VIETNAM WOULD BE WILLING TO STATE PUBLICLY THAT IT WOULD NOT SUPPORT NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENTS IN ASEAN COUNTRIES AND BEING MET WITH STONY SILENCE (REPORTED REFTEL B). HE INDICATED THAT HE DID NOT BELIEVE THIS INCIDENT HAD REALLY DAMAGED ATMOSPHERE OF VISIT.

3. FROM LIN'S COMMENTS ON TIMING OF PHAM VAN DONG VISIT, IT APPEARS THAT ASEAN COUNTRIES ARE KEEPING EACH OTHER CURRENTLY INFORMED ON SRV APPROACHES.

4. COMMENT: SINGAPORE IS CLEARLY MAINTAINING ITS CAUTIOUS ATTITUDE TOWARD THE SRV. ALTHOUGH THE GOS MAY BE "NOT DISAPPOINTED" AT ITS OMISSION FROM PHAM VAN DONG'S ITINERARY, IT SEEMS TO BE CONSULTING CLOSELY WITH ITS ASEAN PARTNERS ON THE VISIT TO ENSURE THAT SINGAPORE DOES NOT FIND ITSELF ISOLATED FROM THEM BY SRV DIPLOMACY. WE HAVE HEARD FROM OTHER SOURCES THAT PHAN HEIN VISIT DID NOT GO WELL. NOT ONLY WAS RAJA QUITE HARD ON PHAN HIEN, BUT REQUESTED MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER LEE KUAN YEW WAS NOT ARRANGED. FURTHER, DELAY IN ESTABLISHMENT OF SINGAPORE TRADE MISSION IN HANOI APPEARS TO BE LONGER THAN LOGISTICALLY NECESSARY.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRIME MINISTER, MINISTERIAL VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978SINGAP03896
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780357-0044
Format: TEL
From: SINGAPORE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978083/aaaaacdgtel
Line Count: 95
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 761aa45c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 SINGAPORE 3755, 78 JAKARTA 11191, 78 KUALA LUMPUR 9089
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1638076
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VIETNAMESE PRIME MINISTER'S ASEAN VISITS
TAGS: PEPR, VN, ASEAN, (PHAM VAN DONG)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/761aa45c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014